



Report of: Executive Manager Community Services

Relevant Portfolio Holder: Councillor A Fowler

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SUBJECT: NOISE MANAGEMENT POLICY

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To advise Members of the status of the Council's Noise Management Policy, as requested during the meeting of the 1st October 2009.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS TO EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3.1 That the report be noted

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Members will recall that on the 1st October 2009, during a discussion on Enforcement Policies, a request was made for a report to be brought before the Committee in relation to the Council's Noise Management Policy.

4.2 The Noise Management policy was approved by Council in July of 2007. The document was produced following the publication of a joint DEFRA / Chartered Institute of Environmental Health Neighbourhood Noise Management Guide. The policy was, in fact, based on this national guidance. The aim of that guide was to "encourage and enable even better and more consistent standards of practice among enforcement authorities".

- 4.3 The Noise Management Policy is available on the Council's website within the environmental protection pages. The document introduces the concept of noise and details the types and numbers of complaints that we deal with. There is also information concerning the Division and the staffing levels and staff training issues. Full details of how to complain to us are included and our procedures are provided in some detail. Background information on the legislation and how we enforce it is also included and the policy also formalised when we would consider a complaint resolved.
- 4.4 It is worth noting that most of our noise procedures are already part of an ISO 9001:2000 Quality System and the many of the complaints dealt with using these procedures are audited to ensure consistency.

5.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 5.1 Since the policy was adopted it has not resulted in any major changes in the way noise complaints are dealt with. It allows us to deal with noise complaints effectively and offer a good service to the public. In formalising when we class a complaint as "resolved", the policy has allowed us to close some long standing complaints, where the amount of resources being utilised was disproportionate to the scale of the problem.
- 5.2 The Environmental Protection Section continues to deploy recording equipment and/or use officer visits where problems arise out of office hours. This continues to be successful in the vast majority of cases. There has been no demonstrable need for further resources aimed at tackling night noise problems.

6.0 ISSUES

- 6.1 The policy is due to be formally reviewed next year, although it is not envisaged at this stage that there will be anything other than administrative changes made. For example, by next year the Section will no longer be based within Westec House and will be located at Stanley Depot. This will improve our response time to "urgent" daytime noise issues in Skelmersdale. Additionally the relevant "District to Borough" changes will be required.

8.0 PROPOSALS

- 8.1 There are no proposals for change being considered to the policy and it is hoped we can continue to offer an effective service to our residents through it's implementation.

9.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY

- 9.1 The effective resolution of noise problems can lead to improved mental health and a reduction in stress levels of the individuals concerned.

10.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no financial/resource implications.

11.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

11.1 The Council has a statutory duty to respond to noise complaints and the possession of a Noise Management Policy should ensure that complaints are dealt with effectively and consistently.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

There is no evidence from an initial assessment of an adverse impact on equality in relation to the equality target groups.

Appendices

None